



Shelves of Miracles



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Chapter 1 by Elena Lace

This is a story about choice. About destiny. And learning to cope with a broken heart.

The sound of a bell circulated throughout the dusty bookshop, quite scaring the old man and the new customer alike. Both brown haired and fair skinned. The old shop keeper could tell from the moment they met, she was the one, she could choose.

As Mariana went to open her mouth to ask where the Non- Fiction section was the old man quickly shushed her. Then proceeded to pull a lever containing a hidden section with gilded shelves. They reached miles high and seemed to have their own glow of energy.

"Pick one, any one", the shop owner gestured and then pulled her closer to the shelves.

"I'm sorry, sir what do you mean? I believe this is a fiction area, I prefer stories with fact, not simple make believe".

"Make believe! MAKE BELIEVE! How dare you, choose a book!" responded the old man.

After a short moment of calming down and some awkward silence he repeated his request

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"You have the ability to the make a choice, whether you want to or not, choose one that calls to you, trust me it will be worth it."

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With caution, Mariana chose her book and with one small peak the shop was engulfed and a new room appeared

Chapter 2 by LethalPianist



It's the most breathtaking place imaginable. A golden horn sits in the middle of a green meadow with patches of gorgeous flowers. The sky is azure blue with puffy white clouds. Bright songbirds flutter overhead. It smelled fantastic. The meadow seemed to stretch for miles. Far in the distance, in one direction, there seems to be a woods, in the other, a snowcapped mountain.

"Good choice." The voice of the shop keeper guffawed. "Suzanne Collins, Hunger Games. Good series."

Marianna noticed the booming voice from the golden horn counting down. She got a bad feeling. There were quite a few other children here too, arranged in a circular fashion around the golden horn.

"H-hey..." Marianna strode towards one of other children. They watched her in horror as a click sounded.

The mines buried around Marianna's pod blew up.

She found herself back in the bookshop, having dropped the book on the ground. Marianna's breath gradually slowed.

"Not even five minutes, and you died." The shopkeeper tutted. "You need to get better at this, child."

Chapter 3 by Phantim



The girl was in awe.

"Can this be real?" she asked.

No reply came from the old man as she stretched out her hand towards another golden book on the shelf. Her fingers hovered just a millimeter from the book's cover

"Harry Potter: The Goblet of Fire" See more of Story Wars

She closed her eyes and s

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Suddenly Mariana was standing outside Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. She was wearing a black robe and had a wand in her hand. She heard carriages approaching and the cheery chit-chat of many people. Looking around at the castle in wonder she said "Is this real? This is amazing!"

"I thought you didn't like fiction? Make believe?" a voice whisper in her ear. When she turns around though, no one is there.

When she turns back around she see's a pale man in black robes and greasy black hair parted down the middle.

"What... are... you doing here girl? Go join your classmates in the Great Hall." the man said.

"Wait, who are you?" she asked.

"Don't be daft girl, I am your potions professor, Severus Snape. Are you not feeling well?" Professor Snape asked her.

"N-no. I'm fine thanks! I'll just uh, head to the great hall then!" Mariana said. She then began to scuttle off away from the professor and towards the Great Hall. Then suddenly she was back in the bookstore.

"Well, not everyone masters that so quickly!" the old man says.

But the girl has already reached out and grabbed another book.

"50 shades of Grey" the cover read. The old man rolled his eyes.

Chapter 4 by R



"Not that one, I think." He said, pushing the book back on to the shelf and out of her hands just as it had started to set in. "Honestly, I don't know why that's even in here. Probably Illyana's fault. fault."

"I thought you said I was the only one who could do this." Mariana commented. It might be

selfish, but she didn't want to share this with anyone else. She kind of just wanted to stay in here forever.

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"You are here." He told her. "This is a high fiction, others can enter this universe as well."

"Are you saying that all of this is a story?" She asked him, her scientific mind raging with questions. "How would a fictional character even arrive here? And, if she can change what's going on, does that mean that I could change what happens inside a story?"

"I'm not certain if we are fictional, but Illyana is from a place in her world far away from the point of view. Her actions are not bound by the story, just as yours are not, unless you come across and become part of the story. Then, for as long as the scene drags on, you are trapped by the words."

"So, I can enter the places in books that aren't written about?" Mariana asked him.

"Yes. My brother - he was the last person who was able to choose. We gathered this library, started to explore and map out all of these fictional universes, even as more were created - or, perhaps, discovered, we aren't certain."

"So that's what you do here? Explore stories?" Mariana asked, and the old man nodded. Then, carefully, she raised her hand up to grab another book off of the shelves.

Chapter 5 by Abigail Holland



The Fault in Our Stars

She is sitting in a chair, in what seems to be a church. Everybody is discussing their problems. Emotions swell up inside her. She feels insecure. She feels like she has a million problems. She wants to curl into a ball and cry her eyes out. She drops the book.

"That book didn't feel fun." She says, holding back tears.

The old man smiles knowingly

"Every book has a different mood. Just like Every person has a different mood. A different person. "

She walks around the seemingly endless shelf, running her finger down the spine of each one, Reading the titles.

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"Each time we pick up one of these books, we are learning about our surroundings. In a way, these books of fiction are more accurate than any non-fiction."

book you can read."

"Who are you?" Mariana says.

"I am the Miracle Keeper. Welcome."

Chapter 6 by R



She spent many days walking through those halls of books, entering so many stories. She started to get the hang of it, started to understand how to last inside of these stories, how to get more than a few minutes in each one. It was starting to consume her life, not that she minded.

Every day, after school, she would walk down to the book shop. Her parents thought it was a part time job, and her mother was ecstatic - finally, her daughter loved reading. Truly, a victory.

The miracle library was so large. It seemed to be every book in existence, if such a thing were possible. But it wasn't just shelves, it was also the maps of the universes inside of the stories, the extensive notes on histories.

"Why do you do this?" She asked one day, staring at the collection. She wasn't a creative person, but as it turned out mechanical drawings were something of a forte, and she was illustrating some of the building styles she'd seen in her journeys.

"All of this?" The Keeper asked, gesturing to the library, "Or this?" He gestured down to the map he was scanning, a copy of her own sketches but in his own careful, deliberate strokes.

"Either. Both." Mariana replied. "What's the point of exploring all of these worlds if no one but the choosers will ever see them?"

He looked at her, and then carefully pulled out one of the golden books - not off the shelves, but from a drawer here where they worked. He held it out to her, as well as a drive filled with all the scanned materials.

"Through this book you will find..." See more of Story Wars...
blank save for a small index...
key underneath...

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Carefully, having grabbed the drive, she grabbed the book and opened it, letting it suck her in.

Chapter 7 by Pengi



Mariana found herself blinking in scalding sunlight. The rays beamed golden over a tall, opalescent palace before her. She stared up at the parapets and turrets with a feeling of breathlessness. She had seen many a castle now, though the books she'd visited in that dusty old bookshop - Hogwarts, Cair Paravel, Leoch, Isengard, Camelot - but none had ever made her feel the way this one did. It was beautiful, with stonework that looked like the spines of books, and a wide stair leading up to the looming wooden entryway doors, open just ajar, a stream of golden light streaking the stair.

Drawing a deep breath, Mariana took a shaking step forward. Her sneakers crunched on the pebble-strewn beach where she'd come through, her mouth going unbelievably dry. It took a great deal of bravery, which she summons from deep within herself, to walk closer to the daunting form of the palace before her.

With each step, she had to force herself to take the next step as the building sense of panic rose up from her guts. But she made it, at last, slowly but surely. She stopped at the last stair, tilting her head back as far as it could go.

"Through this book, you will find the answer," she whispered to goad herself on. "Through this book..." She took the last few steps forward to the wide wooden doors and slipped her fingers around the gap, pulling the heavy door opened. Gold light spilled around her feet, seeming to pool, like liquid. Her eyes blinded by the brightness, she stepped inside without any idea what lay beyond.

Blinking, her eyes regulated to the brilliant light slowly, like stepping out into the daylight after being cloaked in darkness. As she adjusted, she found she'd come into a wide hall, with black and white tiles that spread far off to the foot of a tall plinth, upon which stood a throne of jewel-encrusted gold. The gold formed a great tree, like a willow, with golden branches that reached

undetectable breeze.

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Mariana stepped gingerly, her eyes on the occupant of the majestic throne. He was a man, thin, with a long, dark cloak sewn with golden thread, was a man not much older than Mariana herself. He stood as she approached,

his eyes wide as he looked upon her, and he waved a hand to an attendant that Mariana hadn't even seen prior to the motion from the man on the plinth. The attendant ran to her, squinting.

"Mariana," he said, voice thick with disbelief. She could feel his eyes roving over her face, his mouth gaping. "Why -- it IS you!" he exclaimed. He looked to the man on the plinth. "Your Highness. It's HER. It's Mariana, returned!"

"Re - returned?" Mariana choked the words out, "How could I have returned when I have never been here before?"

But the attendant was not listening.

He had hurriedly grabbed a hold of her elbow. "Come with me, come with me... Your Highness! It's HER, it's Mariana!" He pulled her along toward the plinth.

The man moved forward from the plinth, in long, graceful strides. "Mariana," he gasped, rushing toward her, "Sister." He fell to his knees before her, taking hold on her hand and raising her knuckles to his lips. "You've returned. Thanks be unto the Author."

Chapter 8 by Abigail Holland



"Um-Sorry. I think there is something wrong here..." Mariana says, quite surprised as to what she has come upon.

"Of course not. You are HER. You are SHE. You are THE ONE. Oh, how much we have missed you." Said the man gallantly, his eyes glinting from the tears building in his eyes. Pure happiness is displayed across his face.

"Here. Come now. I have waited for this moment for a long time."

Mariana follows the man, slowly, hesitantly. The man walks her down a large, golden corridor. Never have she seen a thing of such beauty. She gazes at nearly everything she passes. This place could make the ugliest thing alive look beautiful.

They suddenly reach a fairly tall ceiling. It is red and as yellow buttons strewn across. The door is also red and as yellow buttons strewn across. It is also depressing.

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The man lifts his hand to open the door, and Mariana is almost afraid. He opens the door, slowly, for the door is incredibly large. The massive door aches as if it has not been opened in ages. The man gestures for her to enter, and she does.

The room is huge, but there is little inside. There are dusty books, oh so many books. There is a dusty table. A dusty case. A dusty box. Dusty portraits....

Mariana's mouth opens. She is in complete and utter shock. Frozen, all she can do is stare.

"What is it my dear?" ask the old man.

"These portraits...they-they're of me."

"Of course they are. You were born here. You belong here. But..." The man's golden eyes turn to darkness.

"But, you were taken away from here. From us. From me." His voice is solemn and angry.

"I-I don't remember. No! This isn't true! This CANNOT be true!"

Mariana drops the book angrily and returns to the book shop.

"Why back so soon?" asks the keeper of miracles.

Mariana looks at him in disbelief, quickly grabs her things, and leaves.

the end

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